



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Child Care Research Partnership Grants

HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-YE-0603

Application Due Date: 07/15/2013

Child Care Research Partnership Grants
HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-YE-0603
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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Program Office:	Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Funding Opportunity Title:	Child Care Research Partnership Grants
Announcement Type:	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number:	HHS-2013-ACF-OPRE-YE-0603
Primary CFDA Number:	93.575
Due Date For Letter of Intent:	06/28/2013
Due Date for Applications:	07/15/2013

Executive Summary

Notices:

- On January 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families implemented required electronic application submission via www.grants.gov for discretionary grant applications. Please see *Section III.3. Disqualification Factors*, *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Application Submission Options*, and *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates and Times* for information on electronic application submission and the availability of exemptions allowing applicants to submit applications in paper format.
- This Fiscal Year (FY 2013) ACF has implemented a new application upload requirement. Each applicant applying electronically via www.grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files. Please see *Section IV.2 Content and Form of Application Submission* for detailed information on this requirement.

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) invites applications for Child Care Research Partnerships Grants to support new research and evaluation activities developed and conducted through partnerships between Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies in states and territories and researchers from institutions of higher education, research organizations and other eligible organizations. This announcement will fund up to five cooperative agreements to grantees that will pursue research questions of national and state relevance and will develop research questions and research designs in partnership with local and state child care stakeholders and researchers. These projects will be expected to add to our knowledge about the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and quality improvement initiatives in promoting family economic self-sufficiency, children's healthy development and learning, and support for child care providers.

Projects are also expected to inform the field at large. As such, grantees will be expected to participate in a network of Child Care Research Partnerships Grantees that will meet annually and communicate regularly to share lessons learned, to identify opportunities for collaborative analyses, and to develop collective expertise and resources.

Child Care Research Partnerships will be funded through the cooperative agreement mechanism. See *Section II. Award Information* for a description of the substantial involvement of the Federal Project Officer (PO) in the performance of these cooperative agreements.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Statutory Authority

The Child Care Research Partnership Grants program is funded generally under the authority of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 9858 *et seq.*) and specifically by the appropriation for the Child Care and Development Block Grant made under Division F, Title II of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012, Public L. 112-74, and the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013, Pub. L. 112-175.

Description

A. BACKGROUND

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is a multibillion-dollar federal and state partnership administered by the Office of Child Care (OCC, formerly the Child Care Bureau [CCB]) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to support low-income working families by providing access to affordable, high-quality early care and afterschool programs. CCDF also improves the quality of care to foster children's healthy development and learning by supporting child care licensing and quality improvement systems to help programs meet higher standards and by supporting child care professionals to attain more training and education. To facilitate CCDF services, OCC establishes and oversees the implementation of child care policies and provides guidance and technical assistance to states, territories, and tribal governments as they administer CCDF programs. In recent years, OCC has also taken a lead role in supporting state early childhood care and education systems to help ensure that children receive quality care in order to support their healthy development and school success and that comprehensive services are made available for families in need. OCC has created strategic partnerships with States to improve early childhood programs through a significant infusion of guidance, training, and technical assistance to promote the development of early learning guidelines, professional development plans, development and implementation of quality rating and improvement systems, and coordination across early childhood programs. To learn more about the goals and initiatives of the CCDF and OCC, please visit the OCC website at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/>.

Since 2000, Congress has appropriated approximately \$10 million annually from CCDF funds for research, demonstration, and evaluation. Research funded through CCDF is intended to help child care decision makers in crafting policies that support positive outcomes for families and children; to increase the capacity for child care research at the national, state, and local levels; and to promote linkages among research, policy, and practice. To date, these funds have supported research efforts that have increased our knowledge about the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and programs in enhancing employment and economic self-sufficiency of low-income families and in improving quality in all child care and early education settings to support children's learning and development. Descriptions of current and past research projects can be found at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/topic/overview/child-care>.

B. GOALS OF GRANT PROGRAM

Through the Child Care Research Partnerships Grants, ACF aims to support active collaborations between CCDF administrators and researchers to investigate questions of immediate relevance to local and national policies concerning child care. Projects are expected to address research questions of high priority for

local and state-level child care stakeholders, while adding to general knowledge about the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and quality improvement initiatives in promoting family economic self-sufficiency, children's healthy development and learning, and support for child care providers. Project teams are expected to develop their research questions and research designs in partnership with local and state child care stakeholders and researchers. For further information about prior awards made for Child Care Policy Research Partnerships,

see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/child-care-research-partnerships-2010-grantees>

The specific goals of the Child Care Research Partnerships Grants Program are:

1. *To address issues of current relevance to CCDF decision makers at the local, state, and national levels.* Research and evaluation are critical to understanding child care policy issues, particularly the efficacy of different approaches to child care subsidy administration and quality improvement and their implications for children, parents, and providers. Projects will contribute to the broader knowledge base by conducting new research of direct relevance to state and local CCDF administrators with clear links to questions of significance for national policies and initiatives.
2. *To encourage active communication, networking, and interdisciplinary collaboration among child care researchers and policymakers on critical issues for child care policies, programs, and outcomes.* Research partnership grants help to foster the exchange of current research, ideas, and information among research, policy, and practice communities. To this end, project teams must include a State, Territory, or Tribal CCDF lead agency. In addition, at least one member must be a research group affiliated with an accredited university or four-year institution of higher education or an organization with the capacity to conduct research. Projects are encouraged to include other child care policy stakeholders as research partners, especially organizations that are critical to the implementation of child care policies or initiatives central to the proposed research objectives (e.g., state, county or local agencies administering subsidies or QRIS initiatives; organizations contracted to monitor, oversee licensing, or provide training). Project teams will also contribute to the broader discourse and networks centered on child care and early education policy research.
3. *To increase access to child care and early education policy research at the national, State, and local levels.* The studies funded through this announcement will be made widely accessible to child care and early education audiences. All research projects supported by CCDF funds are expected to communicate findings beyond researcher audiences and to develop communications for policy audiences, as well. Project descriptions, briefs, and any other products or resources developed with funds from this award will be published through the Child Care and Early Education Research Connections website (<http://www.researchconnections.org>). In addition, grantees are expected to identify and/or develop additional opportunities, products, activities, or resources to communicate about the implications and innovations of the research project for decision makers and other audiences, as appropriate, at the local, State and national levels.
4. *To build capacity in the child care and early education field to respond to questions of immediate concern to CCDF policymakers through high-quality research.* Projects are expected to improve the state of the research field by addressing policy-relevant questions employing scientifically rigorous approaches. Projects can simultaneously examine questions of significance for CCDF policies and increase long-term capacity among state and local stakeholders to address child care policy questions through research. Projects that build on existing resources and opportunities with innovative research designs can enhance capacity for child care and early education policy research locally and more broadly in the field. For example, when appropriate, a research design that combines newly collected data with existing state- and local- administrative data can increase capacity to carry out and use research locally by deepening understanding and, perhaps, validating the administrative data. At the same time, this approach can build capacity more broadly in the research field to utilize administrative data, which have immediate relevance for policymakers and other child care stakeholders.

Given these program goals, proposed projects must address applied research questions that inform and

improve CCDF policies, services, and programs. Research topics and areas that are of major interest for this year's grants include:

1. Examination of initiatives to improve child care access for infants and toddlers, including the impact of policies and initiatives on availability of care, quality of care, families' access to wrap-around care, and families' satisfaction with care arrangements.
2. Examination and evaluation of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS), including descriptive and validation studies. Examples include examination of differences in programs/providers and families accessing programs at different rating levels and of differences between programs enrolled in QRIS versus programs that are not enrolled.
3. Evaluation of initiatives to engage and support home-based child care providers, including in-depth examination and comparison of efforts to increase QRIS participation, to support professional development and qualifications, or to improve quality of care among home-based child care providers.
4. Testing alternative approaches and strategies for balancing child care access/availability and quality of child care for low-income families and their effects on child care supply and utilization of child care subsidies by low-income families.
5. Evaluation of strategies for promoting access to child care subsidies, including stability and continuity of subsidy receipt, through family-friendly approaches that make it easier for parents to obtain and maintain their child care assistance (e.g., longer eligibility periods, eligibility during job search, alignment with other programs, etc.)
6. Examination of the impact of CCDF quality funding and supports on the quality of care, professionalization and qualifications of child care workforce.
7. Examination of issues related to early care and education workforce development, including efforts to improve data about caregivers, local and state-level strategies for the professional development of caregivers, comparison of different early childhood credentialing and educational models and their associations with care, in-depth examination of promising training programs or other interventions to support caregivers, and barriers to participation in professional development and quality improvement initiatives.
8. Evaluating alternative strategies to ensuring the health and safety of children in care settings, such as monitoring approaches to ensure compliance with regulations, especially among providers/programs used by families receiving subsidies.
9. Other critical topics identified by the CCDF lead agency or other child care policy partners.

C. PROJECT STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Research Partnerships. Research teams **must** include researchers and a State, Territory, or Tribal lead agency that administers the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Research projects can be led by CCDF lead agencies or by researchers affiliated with an accredited institution of higher education or with a research organization. Therefore, grantees can be institutions of higher education, research organizations, or State, Territory, or Tribal CCDF lead agencies that administer CCDF.

Proposed research projects must be developed collaboratively with agencies administering CCDF programs. Broad-based partnerships are encouraged. For example, the following entities may also be included as part of a research partnership project, in addition to the CCDF lead agency and research organization: (1) partnerships across state and/or local agencies; (2) child care regulatory agencies and agencies that administer child care programs for low-income children; (3) resource and referral organizations which collect and maintain an ongoing database of local or statewide information on child care demand and supply; (4) planning councils, commissions, advisory groups, and other organizations that participate in child care planning and policy making; (5) non-academic research organizations that conduct studies on child care markets, populations, services, policies or other relevant aspects of child care; (6) tribal, county or local agencies that administer child care subsidy programs; (7) early childhood

programs such as public or private child care centers or Head Start; (8) family child care providers or networks of family child care homes; (9) professional organizations and associations; (10) providers of supportive services such as provider training, technical assistance, or consumer education; (11) civic groups and community organizations; (12) foundations and charitable organizations; and (13) other appropriate organizations and individuals. For the State and Territory CCDF Grantees' contact information, please visit:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-grantee-state-and-territory-contacts>. For CCDF Tribal Grantees' contact information, please visit:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/ccdf-tribal-grantees-listed-in-alphabetical-order>.

2. Collection of new data. Projects must involve **new data collections** and should employ the best available research design and methods to address the questions of interest. Research partnerships should develop innovative projects that draw on the resources and opportunities available to rigorously examine questions with implications for CCDF policy and to increase research capacity to address child care policy questions. As examples, strong strategies for evaluating subsidy policies and/or quality initiatives could include planned variations to assess the efficiencies and/or effectiveness of different policy initiatives and/or implementation approaches or evaluations of policies and initiatives using lagged time series or regression discontinuity designs. New data collections may serve to complement or validate information from existing data sources. Ongoing studies might also be replicated, expanded, linked or otherwise utilized in the development of a comprehensive and cohesive research strategy.

Examples of previously funded projects include: a three-state collaboration tracking indicators of child care quality in subsidized child care programs; a partnership focusing on child care workforce issues in New England; and a partnership exploring how child care affordability, quality, and accessibility affect outcomes for families and children, and the role played by state child care subsidy policies. These and other past project descriptions and products can be found at:

[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource-library/search?topic\[2780\]=2780#?topic\[2780\]=2780](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource-library/search?topic[2780]=2780#?topic[2780]=2780).

3. Cooperative Agreements. Project teams are expected to participate in a network of Child Care Research Partnerships Grantees that meet annually in person. This network will: (a) communicate regularly to identify commonalities and develop collective expertise; (b) participate in dissemination activities and develop resources to be shared with the field at large; and (c) create additional opportunities for collaboration. For example, two or more states might collaborate and produce comparable data to better understand some cross-cutting themes.

It is hoped that some of the new partnerships might help increase the comparability of information made available through different data systems and improve methods for linkage and secondary analysis of completed datasets. Thus, project proposals must reserve effort/funds for collaborative, network activities that will contribute to increasing the knowledge base and capacity for child care policy research more broadly.

4. Meeting Attendance. The grantee will be expected to attend, and should budget for, the following required meetings and conferences:

- *Child Care Policy Research Consortium Annual Meeting (CCPRC).* It is expected that key project personnel (e.g., Principal Investigator(s) and CCDF lead agency partners) will attend the annual meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium (CCPRC), which is held in Washington, DC, typically during October, for two full days. The next CCPRC annual meeting is scheduled to take place during the week of October 14, 2013. The meeting brings together grantees and contracted researchers funded by ACF and federal and state CCDF administrators to discuss child care policy research and is an excellent opportunity for the project teams to build relationships with key stakeholders and to discuss implications of research developments and the work of the research partnerships.
- *Child Care Research Partnerships Grantee Meeting.* Project team leads are expected to attend one

in-person grantee meeting held annually to discuss project developments, identify research questions or issues of common interest, and identify potential collaborative products and resources. This grantee meeting is typically held in coordination with the Annual Meeting of the CCPRC, for one day prior to or following the CCPRC meeting in Washington, DC. The first grantee meeting will be held in conjunction with the next CCPRC annual meeting, scheduled to take place in Washington, DC, during the week of October 14, 2013.

5. Archiving Research Products. Results of the studies funded through this announcement, including the implications of results for decision makers at the local, state, and national levels, will be made widely accessible. Publications and other project products must be archived with Child Care and Early Education Research Connections (“Research Connections”). Project teams must work with Research Connections throughout the project period to plan for the archiving and dissemination of research data resulting from their projects. Grantees and Research Connections will jointly select the datasets that are most appropriate for archiving and decide among the options for dissemination that best address all concerns related to privacy, intellectual property rights, data ownership, and other issues. For more information about Research Connections, see <http://www.childcareresearch.org/>. Specifications and additional information regarding data preparation and archiving can be found on the following webpage: <http://www.childcareresearch.org/content/childcare/find/contribute.html>. Public-use data files produced by funded projects will remain in the public domain for secondary analysis through Research Connections.

D. DEFINITIONS

CCDF: Child Care Development Fund

Budget Period: The 12-month period of time for which funds are made available to a particular grantee (i.e., the first budget period would begin September 30, 2013, and end September 29, 2014).

Project Period: The total length of the proposed project, which may be up to 48 months. For a one-year proposed project, the project period would start September 30, 2013, and end September 29, 2014. For a two-year proposed project, the project period would start September 30, 2013, and end September 29, 2015. For a four-year proposed project, the project period would start September 30, 2013, and end September 29, 2017.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$1,250,000
Expected Number of Awards:	5
Award Ceiling:	\$250,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$50,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$1,000,000 Per Project Period

Length of Project Periods:

48-month project with four 12-month budget periods

Applicants may apply for project periods **up to 48 months** with **four 12-month budget periods**. Initial awards will be made for the first 12-month budget period. For 48-month projects, continuation awards for the second, third, and fourth 12-month budget periods will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress by the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government.

Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.**

Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement

OPRE staff will collaboratively negotiate with the recipients of funds regarding the roles and responsibilities outlined in this announcement, prior to finalizing the Cooperative Agreements. This will include discussions regarding whether there are additional areas of expertise needed to fulfill the project goals and working with applicants to identify additional experts or stakeholders who might be included to fulfill any such needs. The Federal Project Officer and other ACF staff will review progress reports and participate in periodic meetings with grantee to remain informed about project activities and progress. ACF staff will provide technical assistance, information, and feedback or other support, as needed. ACF staff will also facilitate connections to other related efforts within the federal government. OPRE will act as a liaison between the grantee, the Office of Child Care (OCC), and other federal agencies or federally-funded projects or initiatives, such as organizations within the Child Care Technical Assistance Network (CCTAN), to ensure that research products and resources developed are translatable to a policy and practice community, when applicable.

Please see *Section IV.5 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of federal funds awarded under this announcement.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

To promote the specific goals of this grant program, applicants eligible to receive awards are **limited** to: (a) State, Territory, or Tribal CCDF lead agencies, (b) institutions of higher education, or (c) research organizations, including:

- (a) State governments
- (b) Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- (c) Public and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- (d) Private institutions of higher education
- (e) Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) as defined in Section 502(a)(5) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1101a(a)(5).
- (f) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as defined in the amended version of the

Higher Education Act of 1965, codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1061(2), and that are institutions established prior to 1964 whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and must meet the definition of "Part B institution" in Section 322 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

(g) Tribally Controlled Land Grant Colleges and Universities (TCUs) as cited in Section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. § 301 note), any other institutions that qualify for funding under the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978, (25 U.S.C. § 1801 *et seq.*), and Navajo Community College (Dine College), authorized in the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978, Pub. L. 95-471, Title II (25 U.S.C. § 640a).

(h) Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions

(i) Non-profits with 501(c)(3) IRS status (other than institutions of higher education)

(j) For-profit organizations (other than small businesses)

(k) Small businesses (other than sole proprietorships)

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement.

See "Legal Status of Applicant Entity" in *Section IV.2* for documentation required to support eligibility.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: No

III.3. Other

DUNS Number and System for Award Management Eligibility Requirements (SAM.gov)

All applicants must have a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM, www.sam.gov) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. Finalize a new, or renew an existing, registration at least two weeks before the application deadline. This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application or receive an award. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew at least two weeks before the deadline. See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at: [https:// www.sam.gov /sam /transcript /SAM Quick Guide Grants Registrations-v1.6.pdf](https://www.sam.gov/sam/transcript/SAM_Quick_Guide_Grants_Registrations-v1.6.pdf).

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and

- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Partnerships must include the state, county, or local agency that administers the Child Care and Development Fund. Additionally, at least one member **must be a researcher** affiliated with an accredited university or four-year college or an organization with the capacity to conduct research.

APPLICATION DISQUALIFICATION FACTORS

Applications from individuals, foreign entities, or sole proprietorship organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Application Submission Disqualifications

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at or acknowledged by ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** See "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

Applications received from entities that are **not** (a) State, Territory, or Tribal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies, (b) institutions of higher education, or (c) research organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and award.

(a) Applications received from State/Territory/Tribal CCDF Lead Agencies that do not include evidence that the applicant is a CCDF lead agency will be disqualified from competitive review and from award under this announcement.

(b) Any applications received from public, private, or State-controlled institutions of education that do not include proof of accreditation as an institution of higher education by one of the accrediting commissions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council of Post-secondary Accreditation will be disqualified from competitive review and from receiving awards. Acceptable documentation as proof of accreditation includes:

1. A current letter from a nationally recognized accrediting agency acknowledging the applicant's accreditation as an institution of higher education, or
2. Applicant's identification number (OPE ID) registered with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Post-secondary Education, which can be found at <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>.

(c) Any applications received from research organizations that do not include proof of Federalwide Assurance (FWA) issued by the Office of Human Research Protections of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be disqualified from competitive review and from receiving awards. Information regarding obtaining an FWA can be found at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/index.html>.

A single State/Territory/Tribal CCDF lead agency may submit no more than one application under this FOA. If more than one application involving a specific CCDF lead agency is received, the first application received will be considered the "official" application, and additional applications will be disqualified from the competition and from award under this announcement.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

OPRE Review Team: Child Care Research Partnerships

c/o ICF International

9300 Lee Highway

Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

Phone: (877) 301-6977

Fax: (703) 934-3740

Email: CCRP2012@icfi.com

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at the ACF Funding Opportunities Forms webpage at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):

Available at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](http://www.Grants.gov) website and at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission**FORMATTING ACF APPLICATIONS****FOR ALL ACF APPLICATIONS:****Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

The AOR is an individual(s), named by the applicant/recipient organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant/recipient and to assume the obligations imposed by the federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards. Each applicant must designate an AOR.

AOR authorization is part of the registration process at www.Grants.gov, where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the System for Award Management (SAM).

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Follow the instructions provided in this application formatting section to ensure that your application does not exceed the page limitations and can be printed efficiently and consistently for the competitive review.

Accepted Font Styles:

All applicants must use 12-point font in Times New Roman (TNR).

Page Limitations for Application Submissions

Applicants must observe the page limitations listed later in this section. Page limitations do not include OMB-approved Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms

All applications must be double-spaced and in Times New Roman, 12-point font. An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the extra pages removed and these pages will not be reviewed.

Page limitations apply to electronically submitted and paper format applications. For applications that are single-spaced and/or one-and-a-half spaced (in whole or in part, except for the exempted elements listed later in this section) and/or use a font smaller than TNR, 12-point, ACF will use a formula to determine the actual number of pages. The formula counts the number of characters an applicant uses when following the instructions and using 12-point TNR and then compares the resulting number with that of the submitted application. For example, an applicant using TNR, 11-point font, with 1-inch margins all around, and single-spacing, would have an additional 26 lines, or 1500 characters, which is equal to 4/5 of an additional page. Extra pages resulting from this formula will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Be sure to print the Project Description and Appendices documents on paper and count the number of pages for each file before submission. Keep the printed copy as a hard copy of your application for your files.

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the AOR Authorization and E-Biz POC instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they will print out onto 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

The Project Description and Appendices files must be numbered separately. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Do not scan more than one page of a document on a single page. Application pages with two or more pages of a document scanned to it will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements listed earlier in this section: the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required Standard Forms, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, contracts, and the Budget Justification. These items may be single-spaced. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced but must be in 12-point font. Resumes must be in 12-point font, but are not required to be double-spaced. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

Application Upload Requirements

Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations for each, are listed later in this section.

To adhere to the two file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

However, ACF understands that all applicants may not have access to this software. Grants.gov offers a listing of several free PDF conversion programs. These programs can be found on Grants.gov by clicking on ‘Applicant Resources’ on the far left side of the home page, and then by following the link to ‘Download Software’ near the top of the screen, or by clicking [HERE](#). Free PDF software is available on this page that will allow users to convert and merge PDF documents. As an example, ACF is providing written instructions on downloading and using one type of free software listed at Grants.gov at the following link: [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov/ sites/default/ files/assets/ pdf995 instructions for video.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pdf995_instructions_for_video.pdf). A video demonstrating this process is also available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lOly0HwXPsA>. ACF does not endorse any of the software listed on Grants.gov, and applicants are not required to use a specific type of PDF conversion software to submit an application.

NOTE: Applications submitted via www.Grants.gov will undergo a validation check. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for more information. The validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. If an application fails the Grants.gov validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review. If an applicant resubmits their application to Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date and the application does not pass the validation check, it will not be transmitted to ACF and will be excluded from the review.

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov

Limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,*,%/,#) including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks, within application form fields, and file attachment names. An underscore () may be used to separate a file name.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options* for more information.

Signatures

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper format application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. Applications must be in two sections. The first section must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification, and the second section must contain all required Appendices. The pages of the two sections must be separately and sequentially numbered.

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.

Instructions on the order of assembly for paper application submissions are available later in this

formatting section.

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Page Limitations and Content of the Application for All Submission Formats:

FORMATTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHILD CARE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS GRANTS PROGRAM.

1. Page Limits and Numbering. Applicants must limit their *entire application to 125 pages*. Pages submitted beyond the first 125 in the two application submission files will be removed prior to panel review. See description in this section for *Accepted Application Format* and *Application Upload Requirements*. This page limit applies to both the Project Description and the Appendices.

- a) As described above in this section, the required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files and, therefore, are not included in the 125-page limit.
- b) Applicants must limit the file containing the Project Description and Budget Justification to *75 pages* total. Applicants must number the pages of the file, beginning with the Table of Contents. Note: References and Budget Justification may be single-spaced, as described in this section in *Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements*.
- c) Appendices are limited to 50 pages. There is a *5-page limit* for each appendix, and numbering must be restarted for *each* appendix.

2. Writing Style. The proposal should be consistent with the format and style guidelines of the current *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

3. Organization of Application. Applicants are strongly advised to use headings and subheadings that correspond to the required information, application sections, and evaluation criteria. **Sections must be carefully labeled to ease reviewers' identification of information relevant to the application review criteria.** Additional headers and subheaders may also be used to organize the content of each section. References must be included in this section, not in the appendices. **Applicants are further advised to include all required forms and materials.**

A. Cover Letter. Applicants should include a Cover Letter using official letterhead of the institution or university, and including the Funding Opportunity Number, the title of the application, and contact information for the applicant.

B. Required Standard Federal Forms and Certifications. Ensure all required forms are signed by the applicant's authorizing official to acknowledge responsibility for the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award. Refer to *Section III.3* of this announcement for documentation required to verify eligibility status.

C. Project Description: The project description should be carefully developed in accordance with ACF's research goals and agenda as described in *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description*. **We suggest organizing the Project Description (narrative) file according to the sections presented below.** See additional instructions later in this section (under "The Project Description") for details on preparing the full project description.

- a) Table of Contents (includes a listing of all pieces of the application being submitted, including each Appendix, with corresponding page numbers)
- b) Project Summary/Abstract (single-spaced, one page maximum)
- c) Significance, Issues, and Objectives

- d) Research Design and Methodology
- e) Dissemination Plan
- f) Management Plan
- g) Staff Qualifications
- h) Organizational Capacity
- i) References
- j) Budget and Budget Justification

D. Appendices, including documentation of eligibility status, resumes/curriculum vitae, letters of support, and/or any memoranda of understanding or other evidence of agreements or partnerships described in the proposed project. **We suggest organizing the Appendices file according to the sections presented below:**

- a) Table of Contents
- b) Required Documentation of Eligibility Status
- c) Resumes/Curriculum Vitae
- d) Memoranda of Understanding and/or Letters of Agreement
- e) Letters of Support
- f) Other Materials in Support of the Proposal

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at [ACF Funding Opportunities Forms](#) or at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#) unless specified otherwise.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes	Submission of a certification is required prior to award for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for the first budget year of a multi-year project; or for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for a one-year (12 months) project period; or for grantees receiving more than \$5,000,000 in Federal funding for a multiyear project to be fully funded.	Applicants are advised of the following requirement contained in Section 523 of the "Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008," (P.L. 110-161, Division G). This requirement remains in effect: Sec. 523. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract in an amount greater than \$5,000,000 or to award a grant in excess of such amount unless the prospective contractor or grantee certifies in

		<p>writing to the agency awarding the contract or grant that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, the contractor or grantee has filed all Federal tax returns required during the three years preceding the certification, has not been convicted of a criminal offense under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and has not, more than 90 days prior to certification, been notified of any unpaid Federal tax assessment for which the liability remains unsatisfied, unless the assessment is the subject of an installment agreement or offer in compromise that has been approved by the Internal Revenue Service and is not in default, or the assessment is the subject of a non-frivolous administrative or judicial proceeding. [Emphasis Added]</p> <p>Accordingly, if applicants request more than \$5 million in Federal funds for the first budget year of a multiyear project to be funded in FY 2010, or as a multiyear project to be fully funded in FY 2010, the applicant will be required to submit a certification complying with the requirements, prior to receiving an award.</p>
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	If applicable, submission of this form is due at the time of application.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.

SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	<p>A DUNS number is required of all applicants.</p> <p>To obtain a DUNS number, go to http:// fedgov.dnb.com/webform.</p> <p>Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.</p> <p>SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov.</p>	<p>A DUNS number and SAM registration are eligibility requirements for all applicants.</p> <p>See <i>Section III.3. Other</i> for information on obtaining a DUNS number at http:// fedgov. dnb.com / webform and registration at SAM.gov at http://www.sam.gov.</p>
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of this Certification is required for all applications.

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

The Project Description

Part I: The Project Description Overview

Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Funding Opportunity Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Part II: General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Letter of Intent

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify ACF of their intention to submit an application under this announcement. Please submit the letter of intent by the deadline date listed in *Section IV.3 Submission Dates and Times*.

The letter of intent should include the following information: number and title of this announcement; the name and address of the applicant organization; and/or Fiscal Agent (if known); and the name, phone number, fax number and email address of a contact person.

Letter of intent information will be used to determine the number of expert reviewers needed to evaluate applications. **The letter of intent is optional.** Failure to submit a letter of intent **will not** impact eligibility to submit an application and **will not** disqualify an application from competitive review.

OPRE Review Team: Child Care Research Partnerships

c/o ICF International

9300 Lee Highway

Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

Phone: (877) 301-6977

Fax: (703) 934-3740

Email: CCRP2012@icfi.com

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

Project Summary/Abstract

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT FOR CHILD CARE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS GRANT PROGRAM

[Section headings are suggested to facilitate organization and review of applications. Note that applications should provide all required information as clearly and concisely as possible, so that reviewers can easily find and assess the project's proposed approach.]

The Approach section of the Project Description sets forth the technical proposal and describes how the

proposed project will be carried out. This section of the application should describe how the project will meet the goals of the grant program by addressing the following:

1. Issues, Objectives and Significance

Applicants should describe their proposed research objectives and demonstrate the significance of their proposal in the context of the existing knowledge base and current research and policy fields. Specifically, applicants should explain how the proposed project will improve current knowledge regarding an important issue or problem in child care policy and/or practice. Applicants should make clear how their project will tackle issues of significance to the partnership's CCDF lead agency and to CCDF policy more broadly. Strong applications will describe how the project will inform specific programmatic and/or policy decisions of the CCDF lead agency and contribute to policy, practice, and future research more broadly, suggesting practical applications as well as longer-term benefits that might be derived from the project's activities or findings.

Applicants should consider the significance, reliability, and validity of existing data pertaining to key questions and identify important gaps and limitations in the literature. Applicants should demonstrate that the project will contribute to the child care research infrastructure and knowledge base.

Applicants should clearly explain how the expected results will: (a) inform future CCDF program and policy decisions; (b) inform CCDF program performance goals and/or OCC policies and initiatives; (c) benefit policymakers on issues of current relevance in early care and education; and (d) help particular populations.

2. Research Design and Methodology

Applicants should fully describe the technical approach for addressing the key issues and achieving the project objectives proposed. The methodological discussion must include technical details of the proposed research design, including description of the following elements, at a minimum: (a) conceptual framework; (b) research questions, hypotheses, and variables; (c) data sources, sampling (i.e., approach and expectations); (d) data collection procedures; (e) analytic plan; (f) human subjects protection; and (g) data security. It may be helpful to include diagrams or tables that portray the interrelationships among the proposed research issues, questions, variables, and data elements.

Projects employing qualitative and/or quantitative methodology are invited, as appropriate to rigorously meet the research objectives and needs of the research partnership. Applicants should discuss the strengths and limitations of the proposed approaches and techniques, as well as realistic strategies for the resolution of potential challenges in completion of the research.

Applicants should identify important research priorities for the first budget period, the degree to which early findings would be useful for policy and practice, and the potential significance of the preliminary data for the continuing research. The applicant should clearly demonstrate their ability to produce significant and practical results within the first 12-month budget period in the event that federal funding is not available for subsequent periods. How these early findings would influence decisions about subsequent stages of the research and contribute to an ongoing project should be addressed.

Proposals should demonstrate sensitivity to technical, logistical, cultural, and ethical issues that may arise. Applicants should utilize collaborative strategies, as appropriate to the project goals and design. As described in *Section I.C*, applicants must propose projects featuring the collection of new data. However, projects may propose to utilize existing data in significant ways (e.g., for sampling or recruitment; to inform design or interpretation; for comparisons). Projects involving administrative or other existing data sets in any way must include an implementation plan fully describing how the data will be accessed—which agencies, organizations, and/or individuals are involved in acquiring permissions, facilitating access, processing and managing data. Projects involving existing data sets should provide clear evidence that they have access to the data (i.e., agreements, licenses, or memoranda of

understanding).

If applicable, proposals should include full description of the following:

(a) Administrative Data. If an applicant proposes to utilize records of state or local agencies, resource and referral files, records maintained by child care facilities, or other primary data sources for any purpose in the project (e.g., sampling, background, comparisons, linking), describe:

- the nature of the data and how they would be accessed;
- characteristics of the sample and how it would be constructed;
- variables or data elements to be used and how these fit within the research plan;
- characteristics of the data (including data quality); and
- how confidentiality of individual records would be maintained.

The application must provide clear proof that the research team has the authority to access the data, including written permissions and/or agreements from the offices or agencies that authorize access.

(b) Secondary Analysis of Existing Data Sets. If an applicant proposes analyses of secondary data sources for any purpose in the project (e.g., sampling, background, comparisons, linking), describe:

- the objectives of the original research and its appropriateness and limitations for this study;
- the nature, scope, and representativeness of the data;
- how the data would be accessed;
- variables or data elements to be used and how these fit within the research plan; and
- characteristics of the data (including data quality).

Applicants who propose to analyze nationally or regionally representative data sets, such as the Child Care Policies Database or data from the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, or National Center for Education Statistics, should discuss how their analyses could address national, regional, or state-level child care market or policy parameters and/or trends.

(c) Linkage(s) With Other Research Projects. If the proposed project would involve linkage with ongoing research, the applicant should explain how linking the studies would accomplish more towards meeting the goals of this grant program. Applicants should also describe:

- the design and status of the ongoing research study;
- how the proposed study would benefit from and/or contribute to the ongoing work;
- how the technical aspects of the linkage would be structured and carried out; and
- the timeline for completion of the ongoing research and linking of the research studies.

Description of the status of the ongoing study should detail the status of the data collection and other phases of the study and the implications for the proposed project (e.g., if proposed project would rely on analyses of data from an ongoing study, what the status/timeline is for data cleaning and how any delays would affect the proposed project).

If applicable, the application should describe procedures to ensure data quality and security and access to the data. Applicant should clearly describe how the proposed research would make a distinct contribution while building on ongoing research. If applicable, application should include a letter of agreement or support as evidence of cooperation from individual(s)/organization(s) conducting the other research project.

3. Plan for Disseminating Research

Applicants should provide a comprehensive communication or dissemination plan demonstrating how the project team will communicate about the project with researchers, policymakers, CCDF agencies, and other early care and education stakeholders. The dissemination plan should identify target audiences and appropriate dissemination products and/or activities for each. In developing a dissemination plan, applicants are encouraged to consult OPRE resources addressing dissemination of human services research, and particularly the report titled *The Value-Added Research Dissemination Framework* (available on ACF's website at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/opre-research-dissemination-project-2010-2012>).

A dissemination plan should include the following:

(a) Plans to consult and/or collaborate with partner agencies to review and interpret the project's findings and its implications for CCDF and/or early care and education policies and agencies. Plans should describe potential contributions from partner agencies and other relevant stakeholders in developing products and/or disseminating findings.

(b) Plans for communicating the proposed research to relevant target audiences, including (but not limited to):

1. Research community;
2. Policymakers and practitioners in the fields of child care and early childhood care and education (as appropriate); and
3. State, Territory, or Tribal CCDF Lead Agencies or local government agencies or nongovernmental agencies that administer CCDF programs on behalf of CCDF Lead Agencies and other project partners, if applicable.

(c) Description of specific products and/or activities that are intended for specific, key target audiences. Applicants should identify both research- and policy-oriented products to communicate project developments and findings. In addition to traditional written research products and dissemination channels (e.g., conference presentations, technical papers or reports, peer-reviewed scholarly publications), plans should identify activities to communicate and/or facilitate use of the sponsored research by policymakers, CCDF administrators and agencies, and/or other stakeholders. As examples, products may include presentations or research briefs tailored for state policymakers, software, or web-based tools, if applicable. Dissemination plans and products may differ substantially depending on the target audiences.

(d) Description of potential collaborative products/activities with the network of Child Care Research Partnership Grantees to develop resources for the field at large.

4. Staff Qualifications

Applicants should demonstrate that the project team has the experience, expertise, and commitments to carry out the proposed project on time, within budget, and with a high degree of quality. More specifically, applicants must:

- (a) Provide evidence that individuals proposed for key positions have the necessary technical skill and experience, as well as the knowledge of CCDF policies and related initiatives, to successfully carry out their assigned roles.
- (b) Identify all key staff positions for this project, the professional and/or technical qualifications for each, the proportion of time staff holding these positions will be committed to the project, the period of time they will be employed, and whether their continued employment will be dependent solely on the funds to be awarded under this announcement.
- (c) Where key positions are currently vacant, include a position description outlining the qualifications necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of each. Include letters of commitment from any individuals who have been selected but not yet hired. If a data collection team must be assembled, describe the expected composition of the team, what expertise will be represented, and how individuals will be selected.
- (d) Identify all proposed consultants or advisors, document their expertise, and describe their roles and responsibilities or how their services will be utilized. Include letters of commitment or intent if possible.
- (e) Identify the authors of the proposal and describe their continuing role in the project if funded.

5. Organizational Capacity

The applicant should demonstrate that the proposed grantee organization has the organizational capacity and resources to successfully carry-out the project on time and to a high standard of quality, including the capacity to resolve a wide variety of technical and management problems that may occur. Applications should include organizational plans for the project, including description of the organizational structure and linkages among project partners, and the respective roles and resources contributed by each partner organization. More specifically, applicants must:

- (a) Provide evidence of organizational resources to ensure successful project management, compliance with terms and conditions of the grant, and oversight of the proper use of federal funds.
- (b) Provide evidence that all partners have the ability, willingness, and flexibility to collaborate effectively with one another in carrying out the proposed project. Possible examples of evidence include: description of how each partner contributed to the planning of the project and/or development of the proposal; description of past or current partnerships among project team members that demonstrate the ability to carry out collaborative research; and/or letters of specific commitment or support from each partner. Describe all cooperative agreements, subcontracts, and other formal relationships within the partnership. Partners who will provide access to data or records must provide a letter stipulating the terms of their agreement with the project team. Describe the future commitment each partner will make to ensure success of the collaboration as it evolves.
- (c) Describe the organizational capability of each participating organization, demonstrating each organization's ability to carry out its assigned roles and functions.
- (d) Describe the relationship between this project and other relevant work planned, anticipated, or underway by the applicant or its partners. Describe funding sources for relevant work in progress.
- (e) Provide a list of partners including the name and address of each organization, and the name, telephone number, and email address of each organization's director and primary contact for this project.

6. Management Plan

Applicants must provide a management plan that describes a sound and feasible plan of action for how the proposed project will be carried out. This section should detail how the project will be structured and

managed, how the timeliness of activities will be ensured, how quality control will be maintained, and how costs will be controlled. Applicants should discuss their management of the project as a whole, and the management and coordinating roles of any partners. The plan should also include the following, as appropriate:

- (a) Project timeline that clearly presents the sequence and timing of the major activities, milestones, products, and estimated completion dates within the proposed project period.
- (b) Organizational and/or management chart(s) detailing roles, responsibilities, and functional relationships among partners and components of the project.
- (c) Description of how the project will be managed by the grantee/lead organization to ensure that members of the partnership operate as a cohesive team and that cross-cutting goals of the project are carried out efficiently and cost-effectively.
- (d) Description of the composition and roles of any steering or management committees, technical work groups, review panels, or other coordinating bodies.
- (e) Clear and practical plans for communication and consultation among team members and key stakeholders to, at a minimum, interpret research findings and results will strengthen the application. However, projects would benefit from planned discussions and milestones to further develop plans, monitor progress, troubleshoot difficulties encountered, develop products, and communicate results of project.
- (f) Discussion of potential problems or challenges to accomplishing the project's objectives, including factors that may affect the quality of the research or its outcomes, may undermine the ability of partners to collaborate effectively, and may hinder the sharing, review, and dissemination of information.

Project Timeline and Milestones

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Legal Status of Applicant Entity

Applicants must provide the following documentation:

Non-profit organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS tax-exemption certificate.
- A statement from a state taxing body, state attorney general, or other appropriate state official certifying that the applicant organization has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly

establishes non-profit status.

- Any of the items in the subparagraphs immediately above for a state or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

When applying electronically, it is strongly suggested that the applicant attach proof of non-profit status with the electronic application.

Additional Eligibility Documentation

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement:

FOR CHILD CARE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS GRANT PROGRAM:

Applicants must provide proof of eligibility status, as specified in *Section III.3*. Furthermore, if a change in CCDF State/Territory/Tribal Lead Agency is anticipated for FY 2014-2015, applicant must provide written documentation, signed by the Chief Executive Officer of the State/Territory/Tribe, assuring commitment to the proposed research partnership and to completing the project described.

Organizational Capacity

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Resumes (no more than two single-spaced pages in length);
- Curricula Vitae (CV);
- Biographical Sketches (short narrative description);
- Copy or description of the applicant organization's fiscal control and accountability procedures;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners and/or subcontractors, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively;
- Child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation;
- Information on compliance with federal/state/local government standards;
- Job descriptions for each vacant key position.

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the

source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is input on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Special Note: *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Pub.L. 112-74), enacted December 23, 2011, limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is \$179,700 (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/ex.asp>). This amount reflects an individual's base salary **exclusive** of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards/subcontracts under a ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget justification using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for each year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

The application's budget and budget justification (i.e., narrative) should reflect the full project period, with each budget period presented separately. For a 48-month project, include a detailed budget table and narrative budget justification clearly describing estimated costs for completion of the project, consistent with the budget categories and amounts reported in *Standard Form 424-A* (included in the front matter of the application, among the required forms and certifications). This section should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate how the budget supports the proposed research and dissemination activities, as well as the necessary management and oversight functions, linking clearly to the grant funding level. The discussion should include the appropriateness of the level and distribution of funds to the successful completion of ACF's goals for the grant program (as described in *Section I.B*) and all project requirements, including costs related to travel for mandatory meetings (as described in *Section I.C*) over the course of the project period. Indirect costs are counted towards the award ceiling.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. When a match or cost share is required, both federal and non-federal resources must be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which the applicant is applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Travel

Description: Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

Justification: For each trip show the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee orientations should be detailed in the budget.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 10/31/2015. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using www.Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at support@grants.gov, to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact Center is closed on federal holidays.
- Applicants should always retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed application due date and time does not ensure acceptance of an application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

Application Validation at www.Grants.gov

After an application has been successfully submitted to www.Grants.gov, it still must pass a series of validation checks. After an application is submitted, Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies that the application has been successfully delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the opportunity is still open, and the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via www.Grants.gov, the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files at www.Grants.gov. To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF that must state that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of the two following reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) at www.Grants.gov.

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov, or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* in this announcement.

Requests for exemption from required electronic application submission will be acknowledged with an approval or disapproval.

Requests that do not state one of the two listed reasons will not be approved.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants must request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

Please Note: electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov **may only be used to request an exemption from required electronic submission.** All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries or requests submitted to this email address for any reason other than a request for an exemption from electronic application submission will not be acknowledged or answered.

All exemption requests must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application (i.e., the Point of Contact), and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The request for exemption must state one of the following two reasons: 1) lack of Internet access or Internet connection; or 2) lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

Exemption requests must be received by ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next federal business day that follows the weekend or federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission."

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.6.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

IV.3. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Letter of Intent

Due Date for Letter of Intent: **06/28/2013**

Due Date for Applications: **07/15/2013**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. Agency Contacts*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

This program is not subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," or 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." No action is required of applicants under this announcement with regard to E.O. 12372.

IV.5. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

Note: Costs incurred for grant application preparation are not considered allowable costs under an award and may not be included in the project budget or budget justification.

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

IV.6. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Submission By Mail

OPRE Review Team: Child Care Research Partnerships
c/o ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

Hand Delivery

OPRE Review Team: Child Care Research Partnerships
c/o ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031-6050

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.3* for information on due dates and times.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: Reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

Application components should be organized such that a reviewer will be able to follow a seamless and logical flow of information (i.e., from a broad overview of the project, to more detailed information about how it will be completed). In addition, it is recommended that the application be carefully labeled to ease reviewers' identification of information relevant to the review criteria.

Issues, Objectives and Significance

Maximum Points: 10

Research Topics (5 points)

1. The proposed project addresses one of the specific research topics of interest (see *Section I.C.*) or a topic that is clearly significant to the CCDF agency in the research partnership. [5 points]

Objectives and Significance (5 points)

2. The application reflects a solid understanding of critical issues, information needs, and research goals of ACF, the CCDF program, and the partnering CCDF agency.
3. The applicant articulates the current state of knowledge relevant to the issues being addressed, demonstrating
 - (a) thorough understanding of the relevant literatures, including important gaps and limitations of existing data and research;
 - (b) how the project will clearly contribute to the child care research infrastructure and knowledge base.
4. The application sufficiently demonstrates:
 - (a) the significance of the proposed research objectives for child care policies, programs and initiatives;
 - (b) how the project will inform specific programmatic and/or policy decisions of the CCDF lead agency;
 - (c) how the project will inform the CCDF program and/or Office of Child Care policies and initiatives, specifically;
 - (d) how the research would benefit various policy and/or program audiences, including: (1) inform policymakers on issues of current relevance in early care and education; and (2) help particular populations.

Research Design and Methodology

Maximum Points: 30

1. The application includes a conceptual framework that is appropriate, feasible, and would significantly contribute to the importance, comprehensiveness, and quality of the proposed research.
2. The proposed research design:
 - (a) adequately links critical research questions, hypotheses, and variables;

- (b) sufficiently describes and links data sources, sampling, data collection, and analytic plan;
 - (c) employs technically sound, rigorous, and appropriate design, methods, and procedures to meet the project's research objectives;
 - (d) reflects sensitivity to technical and logistical issues;
 - (e) reflects sensitivity to cultural and ethical issues;
 - (f) includes realistic strategies for the resolution of potential difficulties or challenges that may arise in completion of the research;
 - (g) adequately protects human subjects and security of all data.
3. The applicant describes important research priorities to be addressed during the first budget period, the degree to which early findings would be useful for policy and practice, and the potential significance of the preliminary data for the ongoing research.
4. The applicant employs sound and appropriate methods and procedures to meet the needs of the research partnership, effectively utilizing collaborative strategies when fitting the project's objectives and design.
5. For a project involving administrative or other existing data sets, the application includes:
- (a) An implementation plan that fully describes how the data will be accessed, details regarding which agencies, organizations, and/or individuals are involved in acquiring permissions, facilitating access, processing and managing data, and evidence that the research team has access to the data (i.e., agreements, licenses, or memoranda of understanding are included in application).
 - (b) Sufficient description of the nature of the data; characteristics of the sample and how it will be constructed; variables or data elements to be used and how these fit within the research plan; characteristics of the data (including data quality); and how confidentiality of individual records will be maintained.
6. For a project involving linkage(s) with ongoing research, the applicant fully demonstrates:
- (a) how linking the studies would accomplish more towards meeting the goals of this grant program;
 - (b) how the proposed research would make a distinct contribution while building on ongoing research;
 - (c) the design and status of the ongoing research study, including the status of data collection and other phases of the ongoing study and the implications for the proposed project;
 - (d) how the proposed study would benefit from and/or contribute to the ongoing work;
 - (e) how the technical aspects of the linkage would be structured and carried out;
 - (f) the timeline for completion of the ongoing research and linking of the research studies;
 - (g) evidence of cooperation from individual(s)/organization(s) conducting the other research project (i.e., application includes a letter of agreement or support, if appropriate). include a letter of agreement or support as evidence of cooperation from individual(s)/organization(s) conducting the other research project.

1. Application presents a reasonable yet comprehensive plan to communicate findings to multiple target audiences at national, state, and local levels, including (but not limited to): (1) research community; (2) State, Territory, or Tribal CCDF Lead Agencies; (3) policymakers and administrators in the fields of child care and early childhood care and education (as appropriate); (4) non-governmental agencies that administer CCDF programs on behalf of CCDF Lead Agencies and other collaborators on the project, if applicable.
2. Proposal reflects sensitivity to the fact that products and dissemination plans may differ substantially depending on the target audience.
3. Applicant proposes research products and dissemination channels that are appropriate for research audiences and that maximize opportunities to build the knowledge base on the project's topics of interest.
4. The applicant proposes products and activities to maximize the relevance and utilization of the sponsored research for policy audiences, demonstrating consideration of appropriate distribution channels to reach intended audiences at various levels of policy development, decision-making and administration.
5. Proposal sufficiently describes products and/or activities that are intended for specific, key target audiences, including both research- and policy-oriented products to communicate project developments and findings.
6. Proposal includes plans and provisions to collaborate with other Child Care Research Partnership grantees to develop resources to be shared with the field at large.

Staff Qualifications

Maximum Points: 15

1. The application demonstrates that the project team has the experience, expertise and commitments to carry out the proposed project on time, within budget, and with a high degree of quality.
2. The application demonstrates that the Principal Investigator(s) and other individuals proposed for lead positions have the expertise required to successfully accomplish the goals of the grant program, including:
 - (a) the technical skills and experience to meet the project's proposed research objectives,
 - (b) adequate knowledge of CCDF policies and initiatives related to the issues identified.
3. The application clearly identifies all key staff positions for this project, adequately describing:
 - (a) the professional and/or technical qualifications for each position,
 - (b) the proportion of time staff holding these positions will be committed to the project, the period of time they will be employed, and whether their continued employment will be dependent solely on the funds to be awarded under this announcement.
4. Proposed staffing is adequate to complete all components of the proposed project, including (but not limited to): the research design, sampling, field work, data processing, statistical analysis, collaboration with partners and with other grantees in the network, and reporting and dissemination functions.
5. The application identifies all proposed consultants or advisors and sufficiently documents their expertise, roles and responsibilities on the project.

Organizational Capacity

Maximum Points: 10

1. The application demonstrates that the proposed grantee organization has the organizational capacity and resources to successfully carry out the project on time and to a high standard of quality.
2. The proposed grantee demonstrates the capacity to coordinate activities with other organizations to successfully accomplish the project objectives.
3. The combined facilities and organizational experience are sufficient to carry out the tasks and functions of the proposed project effectively and efficiently.
4. The partnership is well structured, with clear and significant roles for all participating organizations.
5. Partners are appropriate and demonstrate sufficient organizational commitment and support for the project's proposed research objectives.
6. Partners demonstrate the ability to carry out collaborative research and to achieve the goals of the grant program as defined in *Section I.B* of the announcement.

Management Plan

Maximum Points: 15

1. The application presents a sound, workable and cohesive management plan demonstrating how the work will be carried out on time and within budget;
2. Application includes:
 - (a) reasonable project timeline, presenting a clear schedule of milestones, major activities and products, with feasible target dates.
 - (b) adequate plan for maintaining quality control over the implementation and ongoing operations of the project.
 - (c) an organizational and/or management framework that clearly defines roles, responsibilities, and functional relationships among partners and components of the project.
3. Applicant provides a sound plan for coordination of activities carried out by all partners on project team, demonstrating an effective approach to team building among project staff, consultants and advisors, and partnering organizations.
4. Proposal demonstrates how the project will be managed by the grantee/lead organization to ensure that members of the partnership operate as a cohesive team and that crosscutting goals of the project are accomplished efficiently.
5. Application includes clear and practical plans for communication and consultation among team members and key stakeholders.
6. Application includes sufficient description of the composition and roles of any steering or management committees, technical work groups, review panels, or other coordinating bodies.
7. Applicant includes adequate discussion of potential problems or challenges to accomplishing the project's objectives, including factors that may affect the quality of the research or its outcomes, may undermine the ability of partners to collaborate effectively, and may hinder the sharing, review and dissemination of information.

Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points: 10

1. Proposed project costs are reasonable, the funds are appropriately allocated across component areas, and the budget is sufficient to successfully and efficiently support the proposed research objectives.
2. The budget and budget justification clearly support the proposed dissemination activities.
3. The budget and budget justification sufficiently support the necessary management, coordination,

and oversight functions to accomplish ACF's partnership goals for the grant program.

4. The applicant has sufficient fiscal capacity within the grantee organization to ensure that unanticipated problems can be resolved and that the project will be completed on time and with a high degree of quality

5. The budget and budget justification includes support for the Principal Investigator(s) and key team members (i.e., representatives from CCDF lead agencies and other stakeholders) to participate in the Annual Meeting of the Child Care Policy Research Consortium and annual grantee meeting in Washington D.C.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (www.dbn.com) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section III.3. Other*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets one of the following disqualification criteria as described in *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*:

- Applications that are designated as late according to *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*,
- Applications that are submitted in paper format without prior approval of an exemption from required electronic submission (*Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*), or
- Applications with requests that exceed the award ceiling stated in *Section II. Award Information*.

For those applications that have been disqualified under the initial ACF screening, notice will be provided by postal mail or by email. See *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates* for information on Grants.gov's and ACF's acknowledgment of received applications.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. They are one element in the decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

ACF may refuse funding for projects with what it regards as unreasonably high start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or for projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

The Director of OPRE will make the final selection of the applications to be funded. Applications may be funded in whole or in part depending on: (1) the ranked order of applicants resulting from the objective review; (2) staff review and consultations; (3) the combination of projects that best meet the needs of ACF and the CCDF program; (4) the federal funds available; and (5) other relevant considerations, such as whether applicants do not have additional funding sources for the proposed project.

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1. Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NOA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NOA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail or email. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions*.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the uniform administrative requirements and cost principles of 45 CFR Part 74 (Awards And Subawards To Institutions Of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, And Commercial Organizations) or 45 CFR Part 92 (Grants And Cooperative Agreements To State, Local, And Tribal Governments). The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

Prohibition Against Profit

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 CFR Part 74, Subpart E-Special Provisions for Awards to Commercial Organizations (45 CFR § 74.81_Prohibition against profit), which states that, "...no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 CFR § 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from federal, state, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS-funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against federal funding of inherently religious activities, "Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/>. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html> and at the [Capacity Building Toolkits for Faith-based and Community Organizations](#).

Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award-term-and-condition-for-trafficking-in-persons>. If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §§ 8101-8106) requires that all organizations receiving grants from any federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to

comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government-wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 CFR part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 CFR § 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 CFR § 382.225. The rule is available at [Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace](#).

Debarment and Suspension

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR Part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR Part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at <https://www.sam.gov/>, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Pro-Children Act

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NoA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Applications funded by federal grant programs are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and are frequently requested under the FOIA. In accordance with the FOIA requirement to proactively disclose frequently requested materials at 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D), and as part of on-going efforts to promote openness in government programs, ACF will post some of the top-ranked applications funded under this FOA in its online FOIA Reading Room at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

[e-reading-room](#). As required under the FOIA, each of the top-ranked applications will receive appropriate redaction of specific information to protect personal privacy and competitively sensitive commercial information. Applications chosen for posting to the FOIA Reading Room will be placed on the internet website without further notice to the applicants.

VI.3. Reporting

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section. Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement. Instructions on submission of reports electronically will be provided with award documents.

Performance Progress Reports (PPR)

Notice of Award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use. Grantees should consult their Notice of Award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award. Performance progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

Final program performance reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. For awards that implement the use of the SF-PPR, that form may be found under "Reporting" at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>.

Federal Financial Reports (FFR)

As of February 1, 2011, HHS began the transition from use of the SF-269, Financial Status Report (Short Form or Long Form) to the use of the SF-425 Federal Financial Report for expenditure reporting. SF-269s will no longer be accepted for expenditure reports due after that date. If an SF-269 is submitted, the ACF will return it and require the recipient to complete the SF-425.

The transition strategy is allowing individual HHS Operating Divisions to select--from a limited number of options--the approach that best fits their programs and business process. This transition does not affect completion or submission of the cash reporting to the HHS Division of Payment Management's Payment Management System (PMS). The primary features of this transition for recipients are that OPDIVs that previously required electronic submission of the SF-269 will receive the SF-425 expenditure reports electronically and, until further notice, OPDIVs that have been receiving expenditure reports in hard copy will continue to do so.

All expenditure reports will be due on one of the standard due dates by which cash reporting is required to be submitted to PMS or at the end of a calendar quarter as determined by the Operating Division. As a result, a recipient that receives awards from more than one OPDIV may be subject to more than one approach, but will not be required to change its current means of submission or be subjected to more than eight standard due dates.

Beginning with budget periods which end from January 1 - March 31, 2011, and for all budget periods thereafter, all affected ACF grantees will be required to submit an SF-425 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award using due dates for reports to PMS.

For budget periods ending in the months of:

The FFR (SF-425) is due to ACF on:

January 01 through March 31	April 30
April 01 through June 30	July 30
July 01 through September 30	October 30
October 01 through December 31	January 30

Fillable versions of the SF-425 form in Adobe PDF and MS-Excel formats, along with instructions, are available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/forms>, www.forms.gov, and on at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms>. Further instructions will be provided, as necessary, with award terms and conditions that will address specific reporting periods and due dates on an award-by-award basis.

For planning purposes, ACF reporting periods for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Program Progress Reports:	Semi-Annually
Financial Reports:	Semi-Annually

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 CFR Part 170. See ACF's Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/discretionary-competitive-grants>.

SF-428 Tangible Property Report and SF-429 Real Property Status Report

As of April 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families has been requiring the use of the SF-428 (Tangible Personal Property Form) as well as the SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

The **SF-428** is a standard form used by awarding agencies to collect information related to tangible personal property (equipment and supplies) when required by a federal financial assistance award. The form consists of the cover sheet, SF-428, and three attachments to be used as required: Annual Report; Final (Award Closeout) Report and a Disposition Request/Report. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information.

The **SF-429** is a standard report used by recipients of federal financial assistance to report real property status (Attachment A) or to request agency instructions on real property (Attachments B, C) that has been/will be provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased or constructed) in whole or in part under a federal financial assistance award (i.e., grant, cooperative agreement, etc.). This includes real property that was improved using federal funds and real property that was donated to a federal project in the form of a match or cost share donation. This report is used for awards that establish a federal Interest on real property.

Beginning with budget periods ending September 30, 2012, and for all budget periods thereafter, all ACF grantees are required to submit (as applicable) an SF-428 and SF-429 report as frequently as required in the terms and conditions of their award(s).

The forms are available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/forms>.

VII. Agency Contacts

Program Office Contact

Ann Rivera
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Division of Child and Family Development
Aerospace
901 D St SW
Washington, DC 20447
Phone: (202) 401-5506
Fax: (202) 205-3598
Email: Ann.Rivera@ACF.hhs.gov

Office of Grants Management Contact

Timothy Chappelle
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Grants Management
c/o ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031-6050
Phone: (877) 301-6977
Fax: (703) 934-3740
Email: CCRP2012@icfi.com

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Internet [http:// www.hhs.gov/](http://www.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Internet [http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/).

Administration for Children and Families - GRANTS homepage [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants).

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) [https:// www.cfda.gov/](https://www.cfda.gov/).

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [http:// www.gpo.gov](http://www.gpo.gov).

United States Code (U.S.C.) [http:// www.gpoaccess.gov /uscode/](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/) .

All required Standard Forms (SF), assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Grants-Forms page at [https:// www.acf.hhs.gov /grants -forms](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms).

Grants.gov Forms Repository webpage at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp.

Versions of other Standard Forms (SF) are available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Grants Management Forms web site at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/.

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility_compliance.jsp.

Sign up to receive notification of ACF Funding Opportunities at www.Grants.gov
http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp.

Application Checklist

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> of the announcement. The Certification may be found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms .	If applicable to the applicant, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms . If applicable, submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.	If applicable, submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.

SF-424 Key Contact Form	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms .	Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Referenced in <i>Section III.3. Other</i> in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov .	A DUNS number and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.
Letter of Intent	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the Letter of Intent due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3</i> .
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . Found at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants-forms . For electronic application submission, these forms are available	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

	<p>on the FOA's Grants.gov "Download Opportunity Instructions and Application" page under "Download Application Package" in the section entitled, "Optional Documents."</p> <p>These forms are required for applications under this FOA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that include only non-construction activities must submit the SF-424A and SF-424B, along with the SF-424 and SF-P/PSL. 	
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due as part of the Project Description by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . This is the title for the project narrative that describes the applicant's plan for the project.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Sustainability Plan	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.	Submission of the Project Budget is required on the appropriate Standard Form (424A or 424C) is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

Proof of status as a CCDF lead agency	Referenced in <i>Section III.1 Eligible Applicants and III.3 Application Disqualification Factors</i> .	Required for all CCDF state lead agencies applying for an award under this announcement. See <i>Section III.3 Other</i> for specific documentation requirements related to eligibility. Submission is due by the application due date listed in <i>Section IV.3 Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Accreditation as an Institution of Higher Education	Referenced in <i>Section III.1 Eligible Applicants and III.3 Application Disqualification Factors</i> .	Required for all institutions of higher education applying for an award under this announcement. See <i>Section III.3 Other</i> for specific documentation requirements related to eligibility. Submission is due by the application due date listed in <i>Section IV.3 Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Federalwide Assurance (FWA) for the Protection of Human Subjects	Referenced in <i>Section III.1 Eligible Applicants and III.3 Application Disqualification Factors</i> .	Required for all research organizations applying for an award under this announcement. See <i>Section III.3 Other</i> for specific documentation requirements related to eligibility. Submission is due by the application due date listed in <i>Section IV.3 Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (IDR)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> . The IDR must be submitted with the application package.	IF the IDR is available by the application due date, it must be submitted with the application package. If it is not available by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> , it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.

Third-Party Agreements	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Project Description</i> .	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3</i> . If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.
Letters of Support	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Proof of Non-Profit Status	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description, Legal Status of Applicant Entity</i> .	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.